

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

5 The invention relates to bacterial genes and proteins that are  
implicated in the process of DNA replication and also to bacteriophage genes and  
their protein products that interact with bacterial proteins involved in DNA  
replication. More particularly, the invention relates to compositions and methods  
involving an essential *Staphylococcus aureus* gene and its encoded protein  
STAAU\_R9. In addition, the invention relates to screening assays to identify  
10 compounds which modulate the level and/or activity of STAAU\_R9 and to such  
compounds.